

**Patent claims:**

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1. Appliance for opening and closing a reagent-container stopper in a partially or fully automatic analysis apparatus, in which

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a) a plunger (11) is moved sufficiently far out of an at-rest position into a working position for it to engage on a catch (15) arranged on a reagent-container stopper,

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b) the automatic onward conveying of the reagent container opens the stopper at least sufficiently far for it to be possible for liquid transfer to be carried out by means of a transfer pipette, and

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c) following the liquid transfer, the reagent-container stopper is closed again,

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wherein the plunger (11) is moved out of the at-rest position into the working position by means of a suitable appliance as a result of a movement of the pipetting-needle carrier (4) or as a result of a movement of the appliance which causes the movement of the pipetting-needle carrier.

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2. The appliance as claimed in claim 1, in which the movement of the pipetting-needle carrier (4) is an upward movement.

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3. The appliance as claimed in claim 2, in which the movement of the pipetting-needle carrier (4) is transmitted by a combination of the rocker arms (8) and (19) and the stop rod (9).

4. The appliance as claimed in claim 2, in which the appliance which causes the movement of the pipetting-needle carrier and of the catch (7) is a traction drive.

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5. The appliance as claimed in claim 4, in which the appliance for transmitting the movement comprises the catch (7) and the thrust plate (27).

10 6. A method for opening and closing a reagent-container stopper in a partially or fully automatic analysis apparatus, in which

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a) a plunger (10) is moved sufficiently far vertically downward out of an at-rest position into a working position for it to engage on a catch (4) arranged on a reagent-container stopper,

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b) the automatic onward conveying of the reagent container opens the stopper at least sufficiently far for liquid transfer to be carried out by means of a transfer pipette, and

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c) after the liquid transfer, the reagent-container stopper is closed again,

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wherein the plunger (11) is moved out of the at-rest position into the working position by means of a suitable appliance as a result of a movement of the pipetting-needle carrier (4) or as a result of a movement of the appliance which causes the movement of the pipetting-needle carrier.

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